

E 440
.5
.A91

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



00001747848





THE
RENOVATION OF POLITICS:

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED IN

St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church,

LIONVILLE, CHESTER COUNTY, PA.,

On the Evening of January 4th, 1861.

BY REV. SAMUEL AUGHEY, A. M.,
PASTOR OF THE CONGREGATION.

WEST CHESTER:
E. F. JAMES, STEAM-POWER BOOK AND JOB PRINTER,
1861.

F330
S
A91

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

I am much obliged to those who endeavor to traduce me for delivering this Discourse: it has created a demand for the work. In three days the first edition was exhausted; and if it leads any to more honest investigation, and more rational convictions on the subject of slavery, one object in consenting to its publication is accomplished. Anti-slavery men challenge investigation. The truth is their most powerful weapon. I am aware that the Bible is quoted to defend "the Demon of the Black Power." The Scriptures are also tortured into the support of polygamy. And the Devil endeavored even to seduce the Son of God by garbled quotations from the Bible. Should then any one be surprised that Satan now attempts to sustain his Black Darling in the same way? My views are so well expressed by that eminent divine of the Presbyterian Church, Albert Barnes, that I cannot resist the temptation of quoting his language. "It is propable that slavery could not be sustained in this land if it were not for the countenance direct and indirect of the churches. That is, if all the churches should assume in regard to it the position which the society of Friends has done, and which some of the Scotch and German churches have done, and simply *detach* themselves from it, it is probable that there is not power enough *out* of the church to sustain the system. * * * It is now impossible to convince the world that slavery is right, or is in accordance with the will of God. No alleged authority of the Bible will satisfy men at large that the system is not always a violation of the laws that God has enstamped on the uhman soul. No apologies for it will take it out of the category of crime in the estimation of mankind at large, and place it in the category of virtues. What then in this state of things will be the effect of teaching that slavery is authorised by the Bible,—a professed revelation from God? That in that revelation slavery is contemplated as a permanent institution? * * * And that men who seek to carry out practically what the world has been struggling for in the great battles of liberty are 'fanatics' and 'disorganisers'—are enemies of the plain teaching of the Bible, and rejecters of the word of God? On many minds there *can* be but one result of such views. It will be so far as these are regarded as the teachings of the Bible, to lead men to reject the Bible; to confirm skeptics in infidelity; and to furnish an argument to the rejecter of revelation which it will not be possible to answer. * * * See the struggles for freedom in the world—all the lessons of history—go to confirm the impression that a book which contains such views of human bondage—which would place it among the lawful relations of life, and make provision for its being perpetual—CANNOT be from God."—[See Barnes on "*Church and Slavery*," chap. II.]

FEBRUARY, 1861.

THE AUTHOR.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LIONVILLE, PENNA., Jan. 21st, 1861

REV. SAMUEL AUGHEY :

Dear Sir—We, the undersigned, in behalf of ourselves and many others, request the publication of the Discourse which you delivered on the evening of January 4th.

JOEL HAWLEY,
JAMES DAUMAN,
JACOB ACKER,
SAMUEL G. SMITH,
WILLIAM BABE,
ELIAS OBERHOLTZER.

LUTHERAN PARSONAGE, LIONVILLE, PA., Jan. 28th, 1861.

To MESSRS. JOEL HAWLEY, JAMES DAUMAN, and others :

Gentlemen—Immediately after the Discourse to which you allude was preached, a copy, by others, was requested for publication. I did not consent, principally because during its preparation, being called away to see the sick, I was too much hurried to attend to its literary execution, and I did not feel justified in correcting and improving the language and form of the Discourse, after it was delivered. I waive that objection now, for the following reasons : The position which I maintained is grossly misrepresented through the community. I prefer to be judged and criticised by what I did say, rather than by misrepresentations. I am convinced of the truth and justice of the doctrines maintained in this Discourse, and believe that they will coincide with the verdict of posterity. I never have, and never will stultify myself by withholding from those to whom I preach my convictions, as to the manner in which the Gospel applies to such topics of morals and government that engross public attention. As a man, and a Minister of the Gospel, I am only concerned to do my duty ; the result I leave in the hands of God. I do not stand alone. The request with which you honor me is itself a proof that there are very many around me, who firmly maintain the God-given right of free discussion, and whose political and moral convictions are parallel to my own.

Truly and sincerely yours,

SAMUEL AUGHEY.

DISCOURSE.

"And he that sat upon the Throne said, Behold I make all things new."

REV. 21. 5.

THE personage here introduced is none other than Christ, the Redeemer. After he had made the atonement, and ascended on high, he at once seated himself on the Throne of the Universe. He is still there, and always will be. From there he issues his commands; from there he gazes on all whom he redeemed with his blood; and from there he still continues his precious work by the influence of his spirit, his truth, and his genuine followers. John, looking through the vail which conceals the invisible, saw Christ sitting upon the Throne, and heard him say:—"Behold, I make all things new." He did not say, I will make or I have made, but "I make." He commenced a renovating work when the assurance was given that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. All the events in the history of the Jewish theocracy, the calling of Abraham, the exodus, the giving of the law, building of the temple, prophecy, &c.—the incarnation, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ were only successive stages in the drama of the world's redemption. When John heard the language of the text, Christ was engaged in the same gracious work, and will continue to be until all his enemies are put under his feet, and the last of his ransomed ones are gathered home to glory.

Mark, too, he does not say that he makes some things new, but all. Nothing escapes his renovating power. A vast multitude had been renewed under the old dispensation. Much preparatory work was accomplished. And under the new dispensation, John, his fellow apostles and disciples, and a multitude of private christians had become new creatures in Christ. But this was only a drop of the ocean of good which remained to be done.

The politics, the social systems, the literature and the religion of the rest of mankind, remained to be renovated. And the greater part of this is still to be achieved. Something has indeed on the whole been accomplished during the last 1800 years. A comparatively good beginning has been made. So much has been done that the full consumation looms up in the distance. This grand, universal renovation will eventually be effected. Christ says so; and he is able and will perform all his promises.

Our time, on this occasion, will only permit us to apply the doctrines of the text to the anomalies of our politics.

We have been accustomed betimes to regard our government as a perfect system. In some respects this opinion may be correct. But that it is not in all, is apparent from the machinery of the government, the present aspect of politics, and the legislation to which freemen are compelled to submit. The landmarks which our fathers set up are removed. Sectional ambition, jealousies, and other causes, have alienated a few of the states from the others, and the Union itself is threatened with dismemberment. There is, then, something deficient in the government and laws, their execution or administrators, or all together. Something requires to be renovated. And the question arises what that something is.

Many things, doubtless, have combined to produce the corruption, and the disunion movements in the Republic, but what is the *foundation* of it all is human slavery, or property in man. Our fathers proclaimed to the world, in their declaration of rights, as their conviction for the maintenance of which they pledged "their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor," that "all men are born free and equal." Unfortunately for the interests of freedom and humanity, when they came to form a Constitution for all the states, they admitted into it what was inconsistent with the principles for which the battles of liberty and independence were fought. They made the holders of property in man the controllers of votes, in proportion to the number of their slaves. They had fought for liberty, but they made provision in the Constitution for the restoration to bondage of every slave who imitated their example. Their excuse was that they looked to a

gradual extinction of slavery. They never dreamed that it could long survive in a government consecrated to freedom.

Even in 1774, the first Colonial Congress condemned slavery, and the slave trade, which action was confirmed by the Southern Colonies. And every Southern statesman of the time condemned this dark institution. But alas, what a change has come over the times! Then any and every man could condemn slavery; could call it what John Wesley called it, "the sum of all villainies"—he could do so wherever the stars and stripes floated. But let a man do so now; in the South he will be tarred and feathered, or hung, and in the north he will be called an amalgamationist, an abolitionist, or whatever term is regarded most hateful and opprobrious. In our early history slavery was barely endured—now it is embraced in the South as one of the most prized gifts of God, and defended by many in the North, accomplishing in fact, the celebrated theory of Pope:

"Vice is a monster of so frightful a mien,
As to be hated needs but to be seen,
But seen too oft familiar with her face,
First we pity, then endure, and then embrace."

In addition to beating down all prejudices against itself, this abomination of desolations has been vastly extended. In 1810 there were 1,000,000 slaves. In 1861, there are in the United States over 4,000,000. Slavery has gone over into new territory. And wherever it went it has cursed the soil, and its owners. In material wealth, progress and power, intelligence, learning and virtue, no Slave States do or can advance, equally with the Free. Let the farmers of one county be slaveholders, and those of another contiguous one non-slaveholders, and the advantage is altogether on the side and soil of freedom. And yet the sun never shone on a more fruitful and congenial land than embraced by the Southern States, before it became blighted by slavery. It not only curses the soil, and is fatal to real progress and wealth, but it makes labor itself dishonorable. Those of us who are dependent on physical labor for our support, seldom or never seek a Southern home. If the force of circumstances does take us there, we are most likely to settle in those regions where there are the fewest possible slaves.

No institution ever invented by man, or inflicted by Satan, so degrades the character as slavery. A man accustomed to driving and using his fellow man like a beast becomes beastly himself. He becomes lordly. This is the tendency of the institution. In the language of Jefferson, we can say that, "the whole commerce between master and slave is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions—the most unremitting despotism on the one part, and degrading submission on the other. Our children see this, and learn to imitate it. * * * * * The parent storms, the child looks on, catches the lineaments of wrath, puts on the same airs in the circle of smaller slaves, gives a loose rein to the worst of passions, and thus nursed, educated, and daily exercised in tyranny, cannot but be stamped by it with odious peculiarities." What slavery has made the people, it has made the states embracing it. The Southern States are all more or less dictatorial. They are now cracking their plantation whips over the Union. This is one reason why the South has so long controlled the Federal Government. Southern men in Washington practice what they learned on the plantation—blustering and driving. Northern men, terrified by their noise, have run before the lash. To appease their Southern drivers the North has given and given, until some of the dearest rights of freemen are lost. You and I are, to-day, bound by a Congressional enactment, to do all in our power to recapture a man running to gain his freedom. We may refuse, but if so, we subject ourselves to confiscation of our property and imprisonment. And now the South demands that slavery be made national, and freedom sectional; and aims at re-opening the African slave trade. A President has been constitutionally elected, who does not exactly please the South, and hence the North is commanded to get down on its knees, and humbly beg pardon. South Carolina secedes, but has not a single reason to give in justification, of which the civilized world will approve.

The enormity of slavery is still more apparent, when we reflect that it is in its very nature abhorrent to God. When the Creator says: "He that stealeth a man and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death." "Let the oppressed

go free." "Proclaim liberty throughout the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof." When God uses such language, under the old economy, can He approve of slavery? Again, in the New Testament we are told that, "where the spirit of the Lord is there is liberty." "Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you do ye even so to them." "Call no man master, neither be ye called master." If there is any meaning at all in language, these passages of Scripture condemn slavery—make it inconsistent with the will and law of God. This is the construction which the best men, and the most eminent commentators in the whole world put on the Bible. The voice of the christian world is against slavery, and it understands the Bible to condemn the institution. Only one nation on earth contains professed teachers of religion who pretend to find divine authority in the Bible for African slavery. That nation is our own. Some men in the North, with beclouded moral senses, or in the interests of party and prejudice, and vast numbers in the South, directly under the lash of slavery, teach that the Scriptures justify human bondage. But the language, the precepts, and the principles of the Bible are against them, together with the convictions and the faith of the civilized and christian world. Almost all virtuous men—statesmen, scholars and patriots, philanthropists and divines, from Adam till now, have protested against and condemned this institution. It blights every thing it touches; it demoralizes the Government, and the people; it destroys liberty of speech in the South, and of action in the North; it threatens to engulf the Free with the Slave States. And yet some men, calling themselves Christians, raise their hands to Heaven in holy horror at the very idea of preaching against and denouncing this Hell originated institution. By the connivance of the Government, New York has become a regular slave mart. Vessels, bearing the American flag, yearly carry thousands of human beings, torn from their relatives, home and country, into Southern ports, and sell them into irremediable slavery. And yet these would-be pious souls doubt whether it is wise and patriotic, and safe, ministerial

and evangelical to speak against slavery as a system of iniquity !

Though this cancer has eaten into the vitals of the Republic, it must and will yet be torn up by the roots. He that sits upon the Throne declares : "Behold, I make all things new." This age may be unfaithful and unsuccessful, but if so, God will raise up a better and nobler race, which will be instrumental in accomplishing this grand renovation. Are we willing to engage in this work with the energy of men, the virtues of patriots, and the humanity of philanthropists ? If we are, a political renovation will not only be effected, but the liberties which we inherited from our fathers will be transmitted untarnished to future times. For the ages can never melt into a millennial era until the fetters of human bondage are broken forever.

But in all our efforts at political renovation, we should keep perfectly cool. What is done in passion is seldom well done. Passion is the source of vast misery and mischief. Those who give loose reins to it in determining their political action, will inevitably be drawn into excess. Their own judgment, once sobered down, will condemn them. Who has not learned the truth of this from experience in the private walks of life ? The disunionists are powerfully aided in their treachery by arousing the passions of the South through pictures of imaginary wrong. Let us not be guilty of the same intemperance. The settlement of such a momentous question as that of slavery, demands the calmness of philosophy, and the piety of saints and martyrs. I am aware of the exciting nature of this discussion. I know the reproaches and contumely heaped upon the lovers of freedom and humanity are exceedingly aggravating. But this makes calmness all the more necessary and important. It requires an effort to be collected under such circumstances, but the interests at stake, and the duties to be discharged imperiously demand the effort.

Neither should fear be invoked at such a crisis. The thunders which roll through the political heavens are accompanied by comparatively little of the lightning which rends and destroys. The noise is mostly the uproar of the Devil. Like an animal of a similar nature, he squeals tremendously when stabbed to his vitals. In battle no coward is reliable ; he is neither trusted nor con-

sulted. In the grand moral and political contest before us, fear should be ignored, and our conduct wholly shaped by truth, justice, principle and humanity.

Such a line of conduct will lead a man to examine the facts in the case. The more knowledge disseminated on the subject of slavery, the better for the interests of freedom. There are many prejudiced against every utterance about slavery, and its abominations, simply because they are accustomed to read only those partisan and party journals, which constantly hold up the opponents of human bondage to contempt, and brand them as enemies to the country, and traitors to the Government. The strong holds of anti-slavery are in the strong holds of intelligence, knowledge and virtue. In the very nature of the case, justice could only be done by the man nursed in the school of politics which treats anti-slavery men as infidels and traitors, by examining the facts, both sides of this question, and being governed by the truth, irrespective of partizan considerations.

Hence, we also maintain that all mere party ties should be ignored. I thank my Maker that I have not bound myself to any party. If the organization, for whose candidates I voted at the last election, should desert or change its principles, or another spring up more likely to carry out my convictions, I would at once abandon it. The patriot and Christian should bind himself to principles, and not to parties. It is the object of unprincipled men to gain the leadership of political organizations. If they succeed, and the members of parties do their bidding, the public good is made subservient to private interests, the laws administered for selfish ends, and the country governed to defeat the aims of justice. And this is the condition in which multitudes are placed. There are men who would not abandon their party though it constructed its platform from the maxims of Hell, and nominated the Devil himself for office. This summer, on one occasion, a man asked me what my politics were. I told him. He denounced me for my convictions. I pointed out to him what I conceived to be a false principle in the platform of his own party. As he could not defend it, he declared it mattered not to him whether it was right or wrong, because it was the doctrine of

his party. Of such bigots we can have no hope. But they are others who cling to party merely from custom and habit. To such we appeal, and ask them not to surrender their liberty of action, because they have been identified with some particular organization. We should examine the principles and the objects of the parties which arise, and then unite with that one, and cling only so long to it as its principles are consonant with our own convictions.

It is undoubtedly the duty of all virtuous citizens, to take a deep interest in politics. They should engage in it from a sense of duty, and out of love to freedom, to man, and to God. The politics of the country can never be renovated until this is done. Many virtuous and godly men never go near a primary election. They leave the selection of candidates, so far as they are concerned, to rowdies, professional politicians and interested office seekers. In this way men are frequently nominated and elected to office who are a disgrace to free institutions, and incompetent to discharge the duties of their positions. This is sometimes the reason why men are sent to Congress who misrepresent their constituents, and surrender the interests of freedom at the bidding of the slave power. From this cause there are now incompetent, unreliable, and immoral men in office, all over the land, from the President down. Let then, every philanthropist, patriot, and christian, remember that our dearest interests—our freedom, the maintenance of our institutions, and the hopes of the world require that he should make it his business and duty to do his utmost to secure the nomination and election of competent and moral men—of men who will, under every conceivable circumstance, maintain the right and scorn to do wrong.

In order to renovate our country, there must also be an end to compromising with slavery. All the compromises which have been made are broken. Every one was to settle the question forever. It would not remain settled, and never will until slavery is entirely abolished. Only in one way could the extreme South be satisfied, and that is by making slavery national and freedom sectional. But it is said, that if the North does not obey Southern orders there will be disunion. If so, then let it

come. I love the Union, but I love liberty more. If the Union cannot be preserved without making us a nation of slaves, then the sooner it is desolved the better. It is well said our fathers fought for liberty, and not for union. And now the renovation of the world imperatively requires that we once more imitate their example, only with a different foe. They were opposed by a foreign power. We have nursed a viper in our bosom until it is gnawing the very vitals of freedom. With that foe we should grapple at once. We should say with the firmness of Christians and patriots, thus far hast thou come, but no farther shalt thou go.

I do not advocate legislative interference with slavery in the states where it exists. Let every state always manage its domestic institutions as it chooses. But we must, in obedience to the commands and precepts of Christ, employ moral suasion. It is sometimes said, let slavery alone and it will die out itself. Never would this follow. No evil or sin ever dies out of itself. The mission of Christ into the world was to destroy iniquity. There is a constant warfare carried on by Christ and his followers against sin, oppression and wrong of every kind. And this warfare will never cease until all things shall be made new—until every man in the world lives in the enjoyment of civil and religious freedom.

I am aware, that in this grand renovating work, there will be temporary suffering and loss. When a man violates the laws of health and sickens, the remedies employed for his restoration frequently distress his pocket and his body. Our revolutionary struggle produced a vast amount of misery and blood. But no one now disputes the patriotism, and benign results of that protracted contest. If we now firmly maintain our rights against the aggressions of slavery, similar calamities may befall us. I do not say that it will be so, but it may. I know not the specific future. I pretend to no prophetic power. All that I am certain of is, that if the North performs its duty—refuses to make any more compromises with slavery, and prevents its further extension, the highest interests of humanity will be subserved. I have confidence in God, and believe if we obey him, light will emerge

from the darkness and gloom which seems to have enveloped the nation.

We must act for the future as well as the present. We execrate the old world for having fastened slavery upon us, during our colonial state. Should the North, at this eventful period, tolerate that for which the old world is condemned? Should these United States permit future ages to detest them for cursing them with this nefarious institution? It should not be. Civilization, philanthropy, humanity and religion protest against it. God and nature cry out against the extension of slavery. Let its progress then at once be arrested. Let not another foot of territory be defaced by a race of slaves.

You all sympathize with the heroes of liberty in the old world. You rejoice in the success which crowns their efforts. Why then not imitate that which you commend in the patriotism of other lands? There can be no mistake concerning the estimation in which we are held by them. The noblest and purest minds in the old world sympathize with the opponents of slavery here. Garibaldi, Kossuth and Victor Emanuel, side with those of us who are determined to stop the progress of the slavery despotism. Our cause is theirs, and theirs ours. The mutual purpose which actuates us, is the emancipation of men from a cruel and oppressive bondage. And can it be, that in an age of light, of knowledge, and of science, when the human intellect has reached an elevation, and soared to realms of beauty, imagination and truth never before attained, in an age when tyranny in the old world is gasping for breath, and the throne of iniquity seated on the seven hills of Rome is undermined, and about to fall, never more to rise, in an age when freedom and equality is visiting the nations of Europe, when the races, one after the other, are reaching for and gaining their freedom, when even the tyrant that occupies the throne of France makes concessions to liberty,

“When the expectant nations stand
To catch the coming flame in turn.”

In such an age shall these United States alone of all people go backward towards the dark ages, by making still more concessions to slavery? Ye fathers, soldiers, patriots and statesmen

that won our freedom and independence, forbid that this should be so! Do thou, oh God of justice, love and mercy, roll back the tide of slavery and despotism!

“Take freedom! take thy radiant round—
When dimmed revive—when lost return;
Till not a shrine through earth be found
On which thy glories shall not burn.”

The last duty to which my time will permit me to allude is that of sincere prayer for the preservation of our free institutions. These are in danger from the corruption engendered by the slavery despotism. Our national sins are as numerous and great as those of ancient Israel. As a nation we have been guilty of corruption, ingratitude and oppression. The North itself is turned into a hunting ground of slavery. And I have no doubt there are a million of slaves secretly praying that their masters and the government which tolerates their bondage might be cursed. The ear of God is as open to their prayers as to ours. If nothing else will, these things should humble us. When calamities overtook the Israelites for their sins, their prayers were not answered until they humbled themselves. We must do the same, and then in answer to our sincere petitions God may avert the threatening storm of ruin which is hanging over us.

The Bible requires us to pray for our enemies. No matter how savagely the South conducts itself we should pray for its welfare. The owners of slaves are among the most unfortunate of men. They have peculiar temptations and trials. We should pray to God that He would soften the hearts of the slaveholders, and lead them to emancipate their slaves; that He would bring the South to its sober senses, and that He would induce it to renounce passion and pride, and obey the dictates of reason and justice. None of you I trust are such unbelievers as to doubt the power of God to accomplish this result. If ten righteous men had been found in Sodom, it would have been saved. Surely there are ten righteous men in this crowded assembly. In your closets then, in the prayer meeting, and in the house of God, let your prayers ascend to God for the establishment of freedom, justice and virtue on a permanent basis. Permit yourselves to be

made the instruments of God for the accomplishment of these divine purposes. Every one of you with a sane mind can be an agent of good, and an apostle of humanity. The humblest of you by hiding your lives with Christ in God, can help to move the arm which moves the universe. No one therefore can say I can do nothing in this crisis of my country's history. You all can do something, and God will justly hold you responsible for every neglect of duty.

For my part my faith does not waver as to the final issue of the present political disturbances. I do not believe that you will ever be summoned to bestow funeral honors upon our departed glory, if the North with united hearts and counsils strengthen the freedom and virtues which still remain. But I do not believe that our blessings can be perpetuated in any other way than by the course which I have depicted.

Let deeper convictions prevail as to the importance of virtue firmness, justice and truth, and more extended and vigorous exertions made to balance the temptations of office and place by moral powers. Let christians everywhere cease from all contention, and concentrate their energies for the maintenance of right, and the spiritual and intellectual elevation of man. Let patriots and statesmen see and feel that it is not commerce, power and wealth purchased by giving way to the exactions of the slave power, but righteousness which exalteth a nation. Let all who love truth and virtue give to the work of political and moral renovation the power of their example, and the impulse of their charity. Let such an array of moral influence be brought to bear upon the nation as shall be irresistible. 'The God of this world will at once feel the shock of the onset and commence his retreat. Let no one turn from this purpose nor cease from this work until the Redeemer has made all things new.'





WERT
BOOKBINDING
Grantville, Pa
March - April 1989
we're Quakers, too

